

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-14 CIAE-00 PM-09 INR-09 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 NSC-10 ACDA-19 T-03 RSR-01 /126 W

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R 151715 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6892

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDELMC

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

CONFIDENTIAL BRUSSELS 1406

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, BE

SUB: BELGIAN DEFENSE REFORMS- GOVERNMENT YIELDS ON
DEFERMENTS

REF: BRUSSELS 575

1. THE MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE VANDEN BOEYNANTS TOLD ME TODAY THAT THE PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE MOST CATEGORIES OF DEFERMENTS FROM MILITARY CONSCRIPTION WILL BE EXCISED FROM THE DEFENSE REFORM PACKAGE, WHICH NOW HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE DEFERMENT MEASURE HAS BEEN PUT IN ABEYANCE FOR TWO OR THREE YEARS, VANDEN BOEYNANTS SAID, IN A MOVE TO DEFEAT THE "CONSPIRACY" RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RECENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. IN A REFERENCE TO THE BELGIAN PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE TERMS OF CONSCRIPT SERVICE, VANDEN BOEYNANTS SAID GOB IS ALERT TO THE DANGER OF FALLOUT FROM THE DANISH DEFENSE REFORM PLAN.

2. COMMENT: I DO NOT TAKE VANDEN BOEYNANT'S LAST REMARK TO
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INDICATE ANY CHANGE IN BELGIAN PLANS, AND I EXPECT THE
BELGIANS TO REQUEST NATO CONSULTATIONS AS PLEDGED ON SEVERAL
OCCASIONS. WITH RESPECT TO THE DEFERMENT POLICY, I SUSPECT
THAT VANDEN BOEYNANTS WAS FIRMLY OVERRULED IN THE GOVERN-
MENT, WHICH COULD NOT HAVE REMAINED UNIMPRESSED IN THE FACE
OF THE LARGE AND REPEATED DEMONSTRATIONS OF LATE JANUARY AND
EARLY FEBRUARY.

STRAUSZ- HUPE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAR 1973
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BRUSSE01406
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730329/aaaahuqz.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 BRUSSELS 575
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30-Jul-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <06-Sep-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 971204
Subject: BELGIAN DEFENSE REFORMS- GOVERNMENT YIELDS ON DEFERMENTS
TAGS: MARR, BE
To: BONN
EUR
MC
NATO BRUSSELS
SECSTATE WASHDC
THE HAGUE
USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

WASHDC

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005